

FREQUENTLY ASKED UTILITY BILLING AND PAYMENT PLANS QUESTIONS

BILLING

Q. When is my utility bill due?

- National Grid - (Narragansett Electric, Blackstone Valley Electric and Newport Electric) - Bills are due before the next meter reading date on your bill.
- Verizon - Bills are due within 25 days of the postmark date on the mailing envelope of your bill.
- New England Gas (Providence Gas, Valley Gas, and Bristol & Warren Gas) - Bills are due 25 days after the billing date on your bill.
- Cox Communications (Cable) - Bills are due upon receipt, but are billed one month prior.
- Cox Telephone - Bills are due within 15 days of the due date on your bill.
- Water Utilities - There are many water companies in Rhode Island. A customer should review the water bill for the due date or call your local water company.

If you have any questions about your bill and when payment is due, you should contact the company's customer service department. All utility bills have a customer service telephone number on the face of the statement.

Q. Are there payment plans available through the utility companies?

Electric and gas utilities must offer payment plans to residential customers that consist of equal monthly payments.

Q. Can customers, who do not have any outstanding balance, enter into a 12-month uniform payment plan at any time during the year?

Yes, a uniformed payment plan is an option that can assist utility users on fixed incomes to pay equal amounts through the summer and winter and avoid high winter heating bills and other seasonal fluctuations. In addition to the 12-month plan, your local utility company may offer other optional payment plans, which may better suit your situation. If you have questions about special payment plans, contact your utility company.

Q. What if I do not understanding the charges on my monthly utility statement?

The billing format for each utility company is different. Utilities strive to make

its bills comprehensive and understandable. If you have trouble understanding your bill; contact your local utility company for assistance.

Q. What are all these taxes on my telephone bill?

There are federal and state taxes on your telephone bill.

Q. What is the monthly service charge that appears on my bills from electric and gas companies?

Your monthly service charge is the base charge for providing service to your location. It covers costs such as processing accounts, meter reading and billing. There are fixed operational and billing costs associated with all utility accounts during the service period whether the utility service is being used or not.

Q. Am I responsible for a bill incurred from my residence?

If you have utility service in your name, then you are responsible party for payment of the service rendered to that location.

Q. If I have been billed incorrectly, what should I do?

The first thing you should do if you feel you have been billed incorrectly is to contact the utility company. Utility companies are obligated to thoroughly investigate the matter and report the results to you.

If you are dissatisfied with the utility's response, then you may request a supervisory review by the utility. If the billing dispute cannot be resolved after the supervisory utility review, then you may contact a reviewing officer (401-780-9700) of the Rhode Island Division of Public Utilities and Carriers' Consumer Section.